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No. I.

LOVE, OR THE FORCE OF GRAVITY IN THE MORAL WORLD.

BY ELIHU BURRITT.

In the material universe, there is one grand royal law, upon which hang all the laws that govern matter or motion. That law, the union and source of all the laws known to the physical world, is the law of *Gravitation*. In its object, operation, and effect, it is to the material world just what the royal law of love is to the moral. To every atom of matter in the universe, it is the command, and the command obeyed: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul, mind and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself;" thou shalt attach thyself to his eternal throne with all thy capacity of adhesion, and draw with thee thy fellow atom toward the same centre. Since the world was made, not a grain of sand, nor a drop of rain or dew, nor a vesicle of air, has ever broken that law; and there has been peace, perfect peace, through all the peopled amplitudes of space. Pervading the whole universe with its socialising influence, it attracts particle to particle, planet to primary, sun to sun, system to system; mooring all the creations of God around his throne, the common centre of matter and of mind. And there, firm and peaceful, that royal law holds them, while they make music with the harmony of their motions, singing as they revolve in the orbits which it prescribed them when eternity was young, and which shall remain unaltered by a hair, when eternity shall be old. Upon the almighty and omnipresent force of that law, depends the destiny of worlds which geometry never measured, the condition of beings outreaching the arithmetic of angels. Should it release its hold upon a single atom of matter floating along the sunless disk of non-existence, trembling would run through all those innumerable creations, "and signs of woe unutterable that all was lost."—Suppose, now, that some human government should undertake to suspend the operation or existence of this royal law of the physical world. And

suppose that its puny arm could palsy that all pervading, concentrating force; what mind could not conceive the awful catastrophe that would ensue throughout the material universe? Millions of millions of suns would be quenched simultaneously in everlasting night. All the worlds they lighted and led, would crumble in their orbits into the minutest divisions of matter, filling the whole immensity of space with hostile atoms, each at war with its fellow, repelling its society, and dashing on in its centrifugal madness, to "make confusion worse confounded." All the beings that peopled those decomposed worlds, would float promiscuous and dismembered over the black surges of the boundless chaos; and not a throb of life nor a ray of light would beat or shine amid the ruins of the universe. Does any one doubt for a moment, that all this, and more than we can conceive of ruin, would be the instantaneous consequence of destroying the great law of gravitation? But what is all this; what to God and his moral universe is all this dire disaster, this wreck of matter and crush of worlds; what this disruption of every vein of life and form of beauty: what is all this to that other and more dreadful catastrophe which War would produce, when it reaches up and essays to paralyze, with its iron hand, the great law of LOVE, the Law of *Gravitation* in the moral world, which attracts and centres around the heart of God, all the hearts that beat with spiritual existence! Amid the decomposition of the material universe, every undying spirit would be safe from the general ruin, nor verge a hair from its moral orbit, nor be jostled from its centripetal tendency towards its great Source and Centre. But in that other act of immeasurable iniquity, man would consign the moral world to a chaos infinitely more appalling than that which would involve the material universe should he strike from existence the law of gravity. He would sever every ligament of attraction that attached heart to heart, spirit to spirit, angel to angel, and all created beings to God. He would set the universe on fire with malignant passions, on whose red billows contending spirits, once blessed, now damned, would thrust at each other's existence, and curse themselves and God. That act would put a sword into every angel's hand, and every harp in heaven, with horrid discord, would summon the frenzied and battling seraphs to mutual but deathless slaughter. It would blast the foliage of life's fair tree, turn the chrystal river into burning pitch, and line its banks with fighting fiends. Hate, malignant and quenchless, would burn in every heart, and no two spirits in the universe would unite, even in a common malevolence.

Worcester, Dec. 20th, 1845.